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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KINSHASA 001291

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: MINOR CABINET RESHUFFLE OF CONGOLESE GOVT.

Classified By: Poloff Edward Bestic for Reasons 1.5 B and D

1. (U) SUMMARY: President Kabila announced a minor cabinet reshuffle on July 11, filling a number of posts that had been vacant. The ministers of defense (from the RCD-Goma), foreign affairs (MLC), and mines (political opposition) all retained their jobs, contrary to persistent rumors that circulated beforehand. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) Positions within the Congo's transitional government are divided up between President Kabila's "Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la Democratie" (PPRD); larger ex-belligerent groups the "Mouvement du Liberation du Congo" (MLC) and "Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie" (RCD-Goma); smaller ex-belligerent groups the Mai-Mai, "Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie-Nationale" (RCD-N, allied to the MLC) and the "Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie-Kisangani / Mouvement de Liberation" (RCD-K/ML, allied to the PPRD); plus the unarmed political opposition and civil society.

3. (SBU (Unclass unless otherwise indicated)) Biodata on the ministerial and vice-ministerial appointments follows:

MINISTERS

Information and Press: Henri MOVA SAKANYI (PPRD)

--replaces Vital Kamerhe, who was recently appointed secretary-General of President Kabila's political party, the

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PPRD

--born 1962; married, five children; a Lunda from Katanga, reportedly related to President Kabila's mother; the senior Lunda in power
--undergraduate and doctorate degrees in international relations, University of Lubumbashi
--vice-minister of foreign affairs, July 2003-present
--(SBU) considered a hardliner; was close to Laurent Kabila, whom he served as transport minister and environment minister
--a prolific author, works include "War in Congo: The effect of Hima-Tutsi ethno-fascism in the Great Lakes Region" (published 1998 when he was a minister) and "Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty: The American Betrayal" (2000)

Culture and Art: Christophe MUZUNGU (PPRD)

--replaces Mme. Pierrette Gene
--born approx. 1960; from Orientale Province; his father (same name) was a prominent Lumumbist politician killed in 1960 by Luba militiamen in Kasai; the son grew up abroad, returned to Congo only in 1997
--reportedly studied law
--a member of parliament, August 2003-present
--helped organize the Forces d'Autodefense Populaires, an armed militia created in Katanga, Kinshasa and elsewhere during the second (1998) war
--was governor of Kinshasa during Laurent Kabila's rule, then vice-minister of sport under Joseph Kabila

Civil Service: Athanase MATENDA KYELU (civil society)

--replaces Gustave Tabezi
--born 1955; a Rega from South Kivu (like Tabezi)
--studied economics at University of Kinshasa
--a member of parliament, August 2003-present, where he chairs Reconstruction Committee; (SBU) considered close to President Kabila's entourage
--participated in Inter-Congolese Dialogue negotiations as a member of civil society; was also spokesman for the Follow-Up Committee that set up the transitional government in mid-2003
--long-time employee and currently a senior executive of the Federation des Entreprises du Congo (FEC, the Congo's chamber of commerce)

Health: Dr. Anastasie MOLEKO MOLIWA (PPRD)

--replaces Dr. Jean Yagi Sitolo
--age unknown; probably a Mongo from Equateur
--a trained physician
--she currently serves as an adviser to Vice-President Arthur
Z'AHIDI NGOMA on public health and HIV/AIDS-related issues
--was minister of social welfare during Laurent Kabila
presidency

Labor: Dr. Jean-Pierre LOLA KISANGA (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Theo Baruti, who was recently appointed governor
of Orientale Province
--born approx. 1965; father from Orientale Province, mother
is a Tutsi
--possibly a trained physician
--has been RCD-Goma spokesman since 1999 or 2000, but has
maintained a low profile since October 2003; (SBU) is close
to RCD-Goma President Azarias Ruberwa; in the past, other
RCD-Goma officials opposed naming him minister, citing his
reputation as a womanizer

Economy: Emile KASONGO NGOY (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Celestin Vunabandi, who moves to Ministry of
Portfolio
--born 1959; a Yina, part of the larger Songye group in
Maniema; (SBU) reportedly fled to Europe as a young man
after his Ngbandi in-laws threatened him (for reportedly
having eloped with his wife)
--earned a doctorate overseas (probably Belgium), in economics
--minister of higher education, July 2003-present; (SBU)
developed a good reputation among donor countries and
Congolese alike in this capacity
--served as RCD-Goma's official in charge of education

Portfolio: Celestin VUNABANDI (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Joseph Mudumbi, who moves to Ministry of Higher
Education
--born approx. 1960; a Hutu from North Kivu
--studied economics at University of Kinshasa, reportedly
graduated in early to mid-80s
--minister of economy, July 2003-present
--a former employee of the tax authority in Goma, he joined
the RCD-Goma movement in 1998 or 1999 and became its official
in charge of economics
--(SBU) was reportedly a close adviser to former RCD-Goma
president Adolphe Onusumba (a sometime rival of Azarias
Ruberwa)

Higher Education: Joseph MUDUMBI (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Emile Ngoy, who moves to Ministry of Economy
--born approx. 1955; a Mushi from South Kivu
--trained as a lawyer
--minister of portfolio, July 2003-present
--was an award-winning human-rights activist in Bukavu in the
early nineties
--joined the RCD-Goma in 1998, a signatory of the Lusaka
Agreement; successively responsible for interior affairs,
then justice, then foreign affairs for the RCD-Goma (until
July 2003)

VICE-MINISTERS

Foreign Affairs: Robert MBUINGA MBILA (PPRD)

--replaces Henri Mova Sakanyi
--born approx. 1950; an Ndibu from Bas-Congo
--PhD in economics
--deputy manager of the Fonds Social de la Republique, which
comes directly under the Presidency; (SBU) it has been
criticized in the past as being nothing more than President
Kabila's own personal slush-fund
--previously served as deputy chief of staff to
Vice-President Yerodia Abdoulaye; taught at University of
Kinshasa

Int'l Cooperation: Christian KAMBINGA (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Tresor Kapuku
--served as GDRC ambassador in Geneva under Laurent Kabila's
presidency; (SBU) GDRC fired him after he voted (per MFA
instructions) in support of a measure deemed to be pro-Rwandan
--reportedly a member of parliament in the early nineties

Mines: Louis-Leonce CHIRIMWAMI MUDERWA (PPRD)

--replaces Jean-Louis Nkulu
--born approx. 1960; a Mushi from South Kivu
--reportedly trained as a lawyer
--until this appointment, was working as an attorney for
President Kabila's sister Jaynet; previously served as an
adviser in various ministries including ministries of sport
and information under Didier Mumengi and Christophe Muzungu
--during the recent war, he led a group of journalists to
meet Mai-Mai commander Padiri in South Kivu, thereby
"introducing" Padiri to the public

Army Integration: Hubert BANDA (PPRD)

--replaces Philemon Mukendi, who was recently named deputy
secretary-general of President Kabila's political party, the

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PPRD

--probably a Nbandi from northern Equateur

Civil Service: Desire KASHEMWA (pol. opposition)

--replaces Ferdinand Chimanuka of the PDSC party, who died in
February 2004
--born approx. 1962; a Mushi from South Kivu; was a cousin
of Chimanuka

Justice: Bundu BUDEMA (RCD-K/ML)

--replaces Koloso Sumaili, who was recently named governor of
Maniema
--born 1964; an Azande from Haut-Uele District of Orientale
Province
--studied law at University of Lubumbashi

Budget: Tresor KAPUKU (RCD-Goma)

--replaces Freddu Suku Suku, who is reportedly waiting to be
named deputy central bank governor
--born 1965; probably a Lulua from Western Kasai
--earned law degree from University of Lubumbashi, approx.
1990
--vice-minister of international cooperation since July 2003
--worked as a lawyer in Lubumbashi, moved to Goma in 1994
where he worked for UNHCR and the Italian
humanitarian-assistance agency
--joined the RCD-Goma in 1998; served in various capacities
including legal, executive and budgetary adviser; from
2000-2003 was chief of staff in for justice/human rights,
under Moise Nyarugabo

Foreign Trade: Gertrude EKOMBE EKOFO (civil society)

--replaces Yves Mobando, who was recently appointed governor
of Equateur
--a Mongo from Equateur

Agriculture: Oscar NSAKULA BIDIFIKA (civil society)

--replaces Samuel Bakatupida from Western Kasai civil
society; may possibly have the same origins

COMMENT

14. (C) For all the delay and internal wrangling (in all
camps) over this reshuffle, the final reshuffle was minor.
MLC chief Jean-Pierre Bemba may axe Foreign Minister Antoine
Ghonda in the near future for becoming closer to Kabila than
he is to Bemba; the rumored replacement would be Alexis
Thambwe, who has a reputation for being corrupt but
intelligent and competent. Defense Minister Jean-Pierre
Ondekane of the RCD-Goma fought hard and successfully kept
his job, despite other RCD-Goma members' charges that he is
both incompetent and corrupt. Also, for all President

Kabila's noise in recent months about combating corruption, one of the reportedly most blatant offenders--Mines Minister Eugene Diomi Ndongala--has managed to stay in the game. END COMMENT.

SCOTT